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Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 TRSE-00 ACDA-12 HA-05
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FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7551
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY LONDON
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PBOR, ET, SO
SUBJ: LITTLE GIVE IN ETHIOPIAN POSITION AFTER LAGOS MEETING

SUMMARY: IN AIRPORT PRESS CONFERENCE MAR 4 ON HIS RETURN FROM DISCUSSION ON OGADEN WAR WITH NIGERIAN LEADERS IN LAGOS, PMAC MEMBER IN CHARGE OF FOREIGN RELATIONS MAJ. BERHANU BAYEH GAVE NO INDICATION THAT DISCUSSION BROUGHT PEACE CLOSER. FOR FIRST TIME RANKING DIRG MEMBER TOOK OAU AS BODY AND AFRICAN COUNTRIES INDIVIDUALLY TO TASK FOR FAILING TO CONDEMN SOMALI AGGRESSION, A CONDEMNATION HE TERMED ESSENTIAL FOR PROGRESS TOWARD SOLUTION TO CONFLICT. ONCE COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL EFFECTED, BERHANU SAW TWO SIDES SITTING DOWN TO DISCUSS COMPENSATION FOR WAR
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DAMAGES, HARNESSING RIVERS IN REGION, AND STRENGTHENING OAU WITH AIM OF ACHIEVING LASTING PEACE IN REGION. BERHANU'S REFERENCE TO REGIONAL AUTOMOMY AS SOLUTION TO NATIONALITY PROBLEMS IN AFRICA WAS FIRST BY EPMG OFFICIAL IN OAGEDEN CONTEXT IN RECENT MEMORY. END SUMMARY.

1. UPON RETURN FROM DISCUSSIONS WITH OAU ETHIO-SOMALI

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GOOD OFFICES COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN (NIGERIA), PMAC MEMBER BERHANU BAYEH TOOK RIGID STAND ON PROSPECTS FOR PEACE TALKS WITH SOMALIA. BASIC TENET REMAINS THAT UNTIL INVADING SOMALIA ARMY WITHDRAWS FROM ETHIOPIAN TERRITORY, IDEA OF HOLDING TALKS WAS UNACCEPTABLE. HENCE, INFLUENCING SOMALIA TO WITHDRAW SHOULD BE NO. 1 TASK OF OAU AND GOOD OFFICES COMMITTEE.

2. BERHANU DWELT AT LENGTH AND REPEATEDLY ON FAILURE TO DATE OF AOU, GOOD OFFICES COMMITTEE MEMBERS, AND OTHER OAU MEMBER SATES TO CONDEMN SOMALIA'S AGGRESSION. HE REGRETTED "STUDIED SILENCE" MAINTAINED BY MOST AFRICAN STATES WHEN ETHIOPIA, WHICH "HAS PLAYED PROMINENT ROLE IN RESOLVING INTRA-AFRICAN DISPUTES ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS," NOW FOUND ITS OWN HONOR AND INTEGRITY OPENLY VIOLATED. REMAINING ON SIDELINES, IN BERHANU'S VIEW, ONLY SERVED TO WEAKEN OAU AND ENCOURAGE SIMILAR TERRITORIAL ADVENTURISM ELSEWHERE. BERHANU NOTED THAT MANY "PEOPLES OF AFRICA" HAVE CONDEMNED AGGRESSION AGAINST ETHIOPIA. IN APPARENT SWIPE AT RECENT HOST NIGERIA, HE CITED EXAMPLE OF NIGERIAN NEWSPAPERS, WHICH PROPERLY REFLECT PUBLIC OPINION, EVEN WHEN SAME VIEWS NOT BEING REFLECTED BY GOVERNMENTS CONCERNED.

3. BERHANU FOR FIRST TIME ALSO TOOK UP QUESTION OF COMPENSATION FOR DAMAGES CAUSED BY WAR AS ONE OF SUB-
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JECTS ETHIOPIA AND SOMALIA WOULD ADDRESS IN PEACE TALKS AFTER COMPLETE SOMALI WITHDRAWAL HAS BEEN EFFECTED. (HARDLY AN ENTICEMENT FOR SOMALIA*) OTHER POINTS HE MENTIONED IN SAME CONTEXT INCLUDED HARNESSING RIVERS IN REGION FOR MUTUAL BENEFIT AND "STRENGTHENING OAU WITH AIM OF ACHIEVING LAST PEACE IN REGION." (THIS LAST POINT, NOT FURTHER SPELLED OUT, MAY AT LEAST HINT AT POSSIBLE OAU ROLE IN DELINEATING DEFINITIVE BOUNDARY BETWEEN TWO WARRING COUNTRIES.)

4. INDIRECTLY REFERRING TO ANOTHER CONCERN FREQUENTLY EXPRESSED OUTSIDE ETHIOPIA REGARDING FUTURE OF OGADEN, BERHANU SAID THAT AFRICAN NATIONS COMPRISED, LIKE ETHIOPIA, OF VARIOUS NATIONALITIES SHOULD DEVISE MEANS OF SOLVING PROBLEMS THEREBY CREATED. ETHIOPIA HAS TAKEN LEAD IN THIS RESPECT, HE SAID, BY INCLUDING CONCEPT OF REGIONAL AUTONOMY IN ITS NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION PROGRAMME. MORE REVEALINGLY THAN PERHAPS INTENDED, HE CONCLUDED, "ALL THAT REMAINS IN THIS REGARD, AS FAR AS ETHIOPIA IS CONCERNED, IS PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE PRINCIPLE."
MATHERON

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TAGS: PBOR, ET, SO, OAU, (BERHANU BAYEH)
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